

The Poetics of the List in *Whim of Variations*

In *Whim of Variations*, Chiara Duchi delves into the artistic and philosophical dimensions of the list as both a method and a metaphor. The act of listing becomes a central tool for navigating the overwhelming abundance of objects in her grandmother's home, each item serving as a fragment of a larger story. The list, often dismissed as a mere cataloging device, is elevated in this work to a dynamic narrative structure—a visual and conceptual framework that holds together disparate elements while celebrating their individual significance.

Drawing inspiration from literary and artistic traditions, her research echoes the obsessive enumeration found in the writings of Borges, Perec, and Eco. These lists are not merely inventories but open-ended litanies that resist closure, inviting viewers to contemplate the infinite within the finite. In this context, the list becomes a way of coping with the vastness of memory and the impossibility of fully capturing a life's story. Each object, whether a statuette or a teacup, is meticulously documented and placed in fluid compositions that constantly shift and evolve, creating a kaleidoscope of infinite potential meanings.

The list in *Whim of Variations* also functions as a site of tension between contradictions: on one hand, it offers a semblance of control, imposing structure on a chaotic, cluttered space. On the other, it invites disruption, as playful variations and unexpected juxtapositions destabilize the initial arrangements.

Moreover, the list is deeply tied to the act of remembrance. By painstakingly recording and reimagining her grandmother's belongings, the artist transforms the list into a ritual of preservation—a way of animating the past and confronting the impermanence of human existence. The repetitive process of listing and reconfiguring becomes a meditative practice.

In *Whim of Variations*, the list is not merely a tool for documenting what is present but a mechanism for invoking what is absent and letting go of grief. It gestures toward the infinite possibilities that lie beyond the frame, suggesting that every object, every story, is part of a larger, interconnected web. The work invites viewers to lose themselves in the rhythm of enumeration, discovering, within the mundane, the sacred and the sublime.